

The Plague

Los Angeles 2020



The coronavirus covid-19 pandemic

By Andrew Lawrence

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Author: Andrew Lawrence

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Contact: andls@aol.com

About the author



Andrew Lawrence is the author of more than 20 life improvement books. His books include

Find Your Life Purpose – in less than an hour

The Happiness Transformation

Step It Up: The Quest For Success

Lose Weight 4 Free

Stories of A Lifetime

His books are available at amazon. Free excerpts at www.andrew-lawrence.blogspot.com

He is also an artist, with over 350 art photos in his portfolio.

www.fineartamerica.com/profiles/andrewlawrence

His art website is www.coolcolorphotos.com

Author contact info: andls@aol.com

Introduction

Welcome to the Plague. Los Angeles, in the year 2020. With fantastic cool colorful pandemic art photographs by the author.

The worst epidemic in more than 100 years hit the US in 2020. It was a deadly disease. It was a deadly disease that spread easily and quickly. A plague. It had also spread around the globe and was called a pandemic. In its early stages, i.e. the first 6 months or so, it sickened over 10 million individuals and it killed hundreds of thousands of people in countries around the world

It was known as the coronavirus and as Covid-19. It was a plague, of biblical proportions. In the early days no one knew what it was or where it started or how to stop it. It was scary. It infected the young and the old. The young were often not adversely affected and often had no symptoms but could pass it on to old people who could, and did, die from it.

Around the world, life was adversely affected and in America, freedom itself was severely restricted by local and state government. And, in Los Angeles, CA where people spend a lot of time outdoors all year round, life was even more restricted. In L.A., on March 19, 2020, by state government mandate, schools were closed, all nonessential businesses were forced to close, beaches were closed, gyms were closed, restaurants were closed, and residents were mandated to wear face masks when outside within 6 feet of others. More than a million workers in L.A. lost their jobs. Supermarkets started to have shortages, empty shelves, especially for toilet paper and water, as people started hoarding necessities. This led to even more fear and anxiety among residents.

Suddenly, America was no longer America. Choices were limited or disappeared altogether. Los Angeles was no longer Los Angeles. Herewith, with artistic photographs, is what it became and what it looked like and, via my pandemic fantasy photos, what it might have looked like.



Andrew Lawrence
Los Angeles, CA
July 15, 2020

Threat Level

In March, 2020, Los Angeles was shut down. It's now July 2020. It's been 4 months. So far.

In March, the Mayor of Los Angeles increased the city's level of alert, to Orange Threat Level, the second highest. According to the official Los Angeles website for Covid-19 here's what that means:

COVID-19 THREAT LEVEL - HIGH - MINIMIZE ALL CONTACT

Threat level: Very high and widespread risk

Threat level description:

Significant and uncontrolled level of COVID-19 is spreading in the community and transmission is occurring rapidly and may soon overwhelm the community and health care system if not controlled. Testing and contact tracing capacity is becoming strained. Hospitals are planning for or surging to meet demand.

Angelenos Should: MINIMIZE ALL CONTACT

Residents should minimize contact with anyone outside of their households. Residents should avoid spending long periods of time in indoor spaces that are not home and only visit spaces and businesses that are permitted, and follow health orders. When residents leave home and are in contact or may be in contact with others, they must wear face coverings and keep six feet apart from other people.

In July, after nearly 4 months, and a short reopening of the local economy, coronavirus cases surged and the threat level approached Red, the highest level.

Welcome to the Plague
Los Angeles 2020

One of the Few Positives

One of the few positives of the plague was no traffic. Prior to the plague, with a population of 4 million, the City of Los Angeles was reputed to have the worst traffic in the world. L.A. was known as the Car Capital of the World. Thanks to the plague, and people staying home, traffic was reduced to that of a small rural town. Severely congested freeways in L.A. looked like this



Los Angeles Freeway

Pandemic Art Photo of the 134 Freeway in Los Angeles, nearly empty in both directions during the morning rush hour. Photo was taken by me through the fence on the pedestrian overpass. I then artistically edited and solarized the image.

Face Masks

A primary mandate by our Governor and Mayor during the plague was the wearing of face masks. Face masks were to be worn whenever you were within 6 feet of someone, and you were supposed to keep that minimum distance (called social distancing). Face masks were also mandatory whenever you availed yourself of food shopping or medical services. In L.A. most/all establishments that were allowed to be open also required face masks upon entry. In reality, I had a mask on, or at the ready, whenever I went outside the house. The masks did not protect ME from getting the plague, it mainly helped protect others, protecting THEM from getting the plague via airborne droplets in case I had the plague and coughed or sneezed in their direction. For me, the damn face masks fogged up my glasses and disturbed my breathing, as if I was rebreathing the toxic carbon dioxide I exhaled.

And, with everyone wearing a face mask, people's faces were partially hidden; their nose and mouth were covered. And, as a result, people could not see you smile at them and you couldn't see them smile at you. Smiling was hidden. This ancient human physical and spiritual greeting was lost. You could no longer tell if an approaching person was friendly or not. Spiritually, souls could no longer acknowledge other souls via the smile. And the masks often made it more difficult to speak and be heard.



Social Distancing

During the pandemic in LA and California it was mandated that people stay 6 feet away from each other. No more shaking hands, hugging or kissing friends and acquaintances. When standing in line at places like the supermarket there was 6 feet of spacing between shoppers when checking out. Sometimes they made you wait outside, in a line, before you could come in.



Food Line

Outdoor photo of food shoppers lined up at a Los Angeles area supermarket waiting to enter during the pandemic of 2020. Reminiscent of the bread lines of the Great Depression of the 1930's (except they didn't have mandatory 6 feet of social separation).

Photo taken and edited by me, who then got in line to buy food.

Social Isolation

As a result of mandated stay-at-home orders in March 2020 by the State of California, 40 million residents of California were forced into social isolation. All nonessential people (non medical, non law enforcement, etc) were told to stay at home, except for food shopping, medical needs and exercising. No parties, no groups, no activities with other people, no going to visit friend or relatives, no going out to eat, no taking your kids to Disneyland, no traveling by air. Anyplace you were allowed to go, you had to maintain 6 feet of social distance. In California cities, and in other states, residents were isolated. This went on for nearly 4 straight months (so far). Cabin fever set in. Depression set in. BOREDOM set in. I was fortunate, I was able, and allowed, to go out, to the supermarket (several times a day!) and walk around for exercise in the large natural city green space setting where I live in LA. Still, I missed being around people. I missed being around people who were less than 6 feet away. When outside and encountering other people I still smiled at people but it was through a mask. They couldn't see me smile and didn't respond. Even among people I was isolated.



Social Isolation

Outdoor photo of a balcony and hammock. Photo taken during the pandemic of 2020 by me.

Scarcity and Shortages

America has always been a nation of choices. Many choices. We could choose to buy from a huge selection of many things; hundreds of different vehicles, hundreds/thousands, of different foods, thousands of places to go, 100 different kinds of bread in the supermarket. Americans were fortunate to have an overwhelming number of choices in nearly every area of life. Choices. That is one of things that made the US a top choice to live for a good or better life. That all ended when the plague hit. America, the nation of plenty, a nation of abundance, suddenly became a nation of scarcity and shortages. Scarcity and shortages the likes of which nearly everyone in America had never seen or ever even imagined. It was a shock. A cultural and economic shock. Now, suddenly, thanks to the pandemic of 2020, there was scarcity and shortages of food and other necessities of life.

People started hoarding. People got scared and, as a result, they bought out all the necessities in the stores. They hoarded. When the plague hit California the two things people hoarded the most were toilet paper and water.



Empty Shelves

Photo of empty shelves of toilet paper in my local supermarket, March 2020. Photo taken by me who, for the first time in my life, was looking at NO available toilet paper. I was stunned.

I was shocked. No toilet paper, in ANY of the stores I shopped at! In the 5 places I went to, all paper products which could be used as toilet paper were sold out, out of stock.



Water Rationing

Bottled water was also scarce. People bought all the water they could find. Yes, in LA, lots of people don't like to drink water from the faucet, they thought it was icky. I was one of those people. When supermarkets got more water in stock they rationed it. In my lifetime I had never experienced rationing, of ANYTHING. Now, with the plague, it was the new normal.

All Restaurants Are Closed

By state and local government mandate, all restaurants in California were forced to close their doors to inside seated dining. There were over 75,000 eating and drinking establishments in California. Take out and delivery were still allowed but many restaurants had to lay off many/all their workers due to less diners and many eateries closed permanently.



Pandemic Dining

Photo of the inside of an empty roped off restaurant near LA the day after July 4th, 2020 and during the pandemic of 2020. The restaurant did not allow inside seating/dining and had done so for more than 3 months, since the start of the pandemic and the state and local mandated prohibition of all eat-in dining throughout California. Photo was taken and edited by me, who was able to get take-out food there to eat at home.

Hollywood Is Closed

I happen to live in the middle of the entertainment business, near Warner Bros, Disney, Universal Studios and hundreds of production companies. I was stunned to see the mandated closure of Hollywood and see the effects of TV and movie production halted. Suddenly, in LA County, 890,000 people working in the entertainment industry were out of work or, if possible, were forced to work from home. How do you make a major motion picture or TV show from home? You don't.



Media Capital

Daytime photo of the closed and empty Burbank Studios. Photo taken by me during the pandemic of 2020 and I edited, colorized and abstracted the photo in honor of the plague.

Offices Are Closed

Buildings and offices were emptied and closed by state and city mandate, visitors and customers were denied physical access.



Pandemic Office Building

Daytime futuristic doomsday photo of a large building in Burbank, CA. Photo taken and colorized for fantasy by me in honor of the pandemic of 2020.

Drive Thru Coffee

During the plague, even the famed Starbucks was forced to deny customers from entering and buying their coffee. Luckily, loyal coffee drinkers were able to get their caffeine via drive thru.



Starbucks Drive Thru

Pandemic art photograph of a Starbucks Drive Thru near L.A. Cars waiting in line to get their Starbucks. Even more cars were lined up in the street to the left. Photo taken by me and artistically edited for a vintage look.

Schools Were Closed

When the pandemic hit schools were closed. All California schools. Following the mandate for all nonessential establishments to close, colleges and universities in California closed, sending more than 2 million college students home. All K-12 students in California were also sent home, well before the school year ended. All 6 million of them.



Pandemic Playground

Photo of an empty kids' playground during the Pandemic of 2020. Photo was taken by me.

No Sports

As a result of the plague, all organized sports in California and across the country were cancelled. No sports. No baseball, no soccer, no football, no basketball. No sports for all K-12, all colleges, all professional teams. Stadiums and gyms and sports fields were empty.



Pandemic Football Field

Photo of an empty high school football field. April 2020. Schools in Los Angeles and across the country are closed due to the coronavirus pandemic. No football practice or games. Or other sports. Or classes.

Gyms Closed

Gyms throughout Los Angeles were closed. People could not enter and exercise. At the time according to industry statistics there were something like 13,000 gyms in L.A. Yes, many people exercise in Southern California.



Closed Clubhouse

Photo of my local clubhouse, now closed due to the pandemic. It contains gym, pool and lounge areas, off limits due to mandated Stay At Home order. Building is locked, entry is denied.

Fear

During the plague people avoided other people. Wearing face masks and social distancing became the new normal. Everyone was scared, fearful, afraid. Nobody knew what was going to happen. Anxiety affected everybody. “Will I get the virus? Will I die?”

Even art reflected the fear and horror of the pandemic. Even MY art. Here is some of the pandemic art I created reflecting that horror and fear.



Outdoor daytime photo of my hand in a disposable glove. Photo was taken by me and edited to portray the Fires of Hell.



Indoor photo of a female figurine holding a snake-adorned mirror portraying her skeletal reflection. Photo was taken by me and creatively edited for maximum terror.



Indoor photo of a zombie. Photo taken and edited by me, in honor of the plague; the pandemic of 2020.



Golden Skull

Indoor photo of a sculptured skull on a shelf. Photo taken by me in honor of those who died during the plague.



Photo of a Dead End street sign, and now dramatic Pandemic Art. Photo was taken by me and edited and colorized for a powerful (and a little scary) pandemic art symbol.

Pandemic Prose

As I mentioned, sometimes the plague produced some wonderful moments. Here is one of them.

It was May 2, 2020. Los Angeles, California.

During the pandemic of 2020, after 43 days of the LA Lockdown, I was up early, before dawn, so, after a time, I went to the supermarket just before 6 am when it opened.

The world was empty. No one was out walking their dogs, or themselves. Very few cars were on the road. Very few shoppers were at the supermarket, I was the first one in. By 6:15 I was done and out the door. On the way home, again there were few cars on the road and no pedestrians.

No people. No traffic. As the world awakened, I felt like it belonged to me. Me and the chirping birds. And maybe a deer or two. Alone together at dawn. It was spiritual. It was good. It was Saturday.



The New Normal

Welcome to the new normal. I don't want or like the new normal. I don't want or like scarcity and shortages and severe restrictions on my freedom to do things and go places. And I don't like being isolated. And I don't want or like people getting sick and/or dying from a plague.

I want the "old" normal back. I want my serene and comfortable life back. And I want my city back.



Mountain View

Photo of an early evening view of mountains between the trees at my residence in Los Angeles, CA. June 6, 2020. This serene photo taken and edited by me.



Palm Tree Road

Photo of a line of tall palm trees near my residence in Los Angeles. Photo taken by me, I then edited and colorized the image to look like a painting.



Golden Sunset

Photo of a sunset over the San Fernando Valley, north of LA. Photo was taken by me. This photo did not undergo any editing, it was beautiful just the way it was and I left it that way. Right place, right time.

Looking Ahead



As of now, July 2020, more than 4 months into the plague, nobody knows what will happen. Hopefully, the pandemic will end naturally or people will develop immunity. Or a vaccine will be developed.

The world needs to survive. The world **WANTS** to survive. The world **WILL** survive.

The plague, 2020. In the end, whatever happens, I choose



THE END

Andrew Lawrence



andls (at) aol.com

My Books

www.andrew-lawrence.blogspot.com

My Art

www.fineartamerica.com/profiles/andrewlawrence

My Website

www.coolcolorphotos.com

BONUS PHOTOS

Here are some additional fantastic fantasy pandemic art photos I created during the Plague of 2020. They reflect what things might look like if the plague not only affected humans but also affected nature.



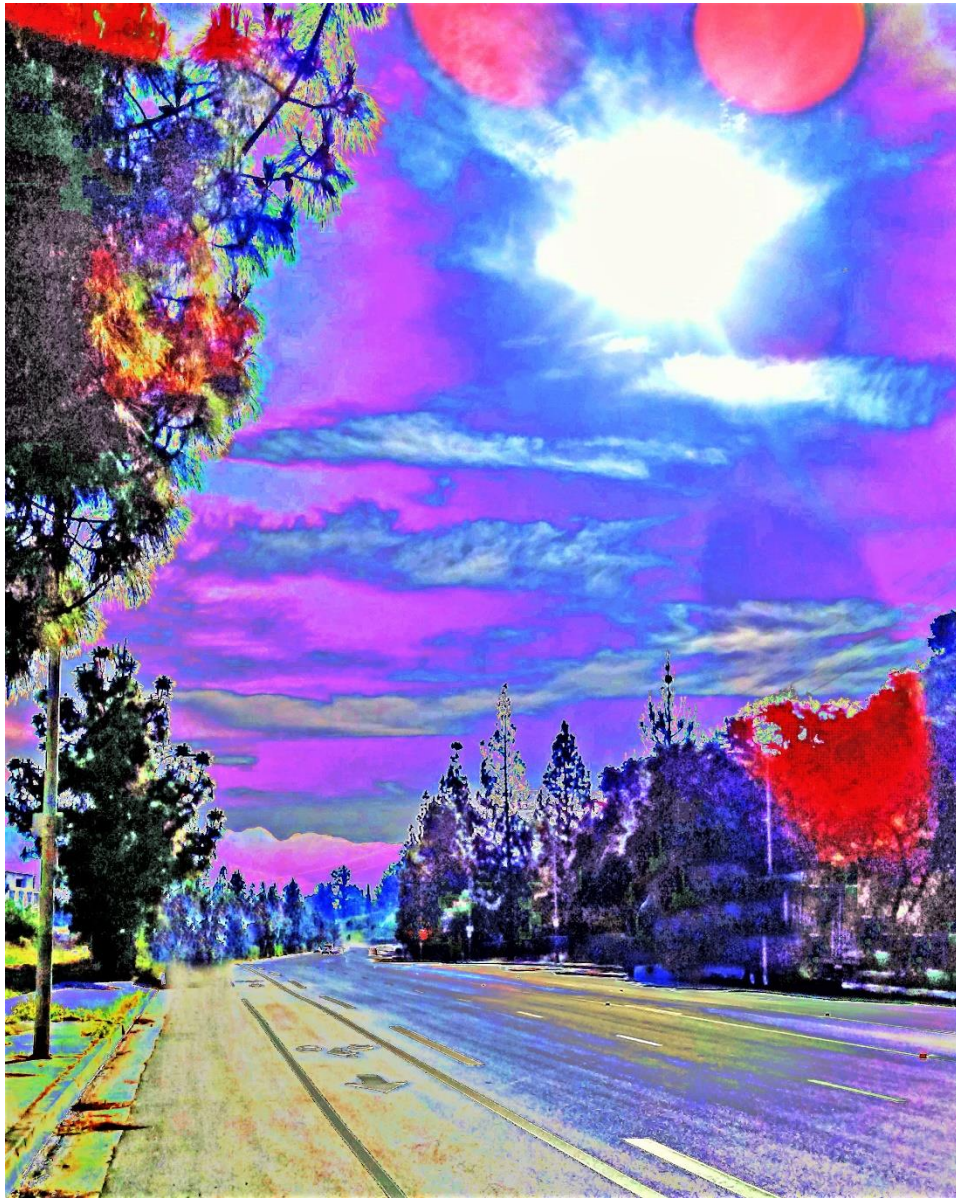
Pandemic Green Sky

Photo taken by me in L.A. In honor of the pandemic of 2020 I made the sky green.



Sunset Fantasy

Evening photo of sunset through the trees, Los Angeles, California. June 1, 2020. Photo taken by me and I then edited the image for composition and fantasy colors.



Fabulous Sky

Dramatic daytime photo of empty thoroughfare near Griffith Park, Los Angeles, CA. Image creatively colorized for added artistic effect. The photo was taken and edited by me June 1, 2020 in the midst of the plague.

Final note

I hope you enjoyed my vision and visual presentation of the plague of 2020. I enjoyed writing it and including my photos. If you would like to see more of my art (non pandemic) including my masterpieces, fantastic flowers, and awesome abstracts, visit

www.fineartamerica.com/profiles/andrewlawrence or visit my website at www.coolcolorphotos.com

Stay alive. Stay safe. Live your best life.



And, yes, feel free to send this pandemic picture pdf to anyone or everyone you think might enjoy it.